

Associations between teachers’ personality, psychological well-being, and the quality of their cocaring relationships



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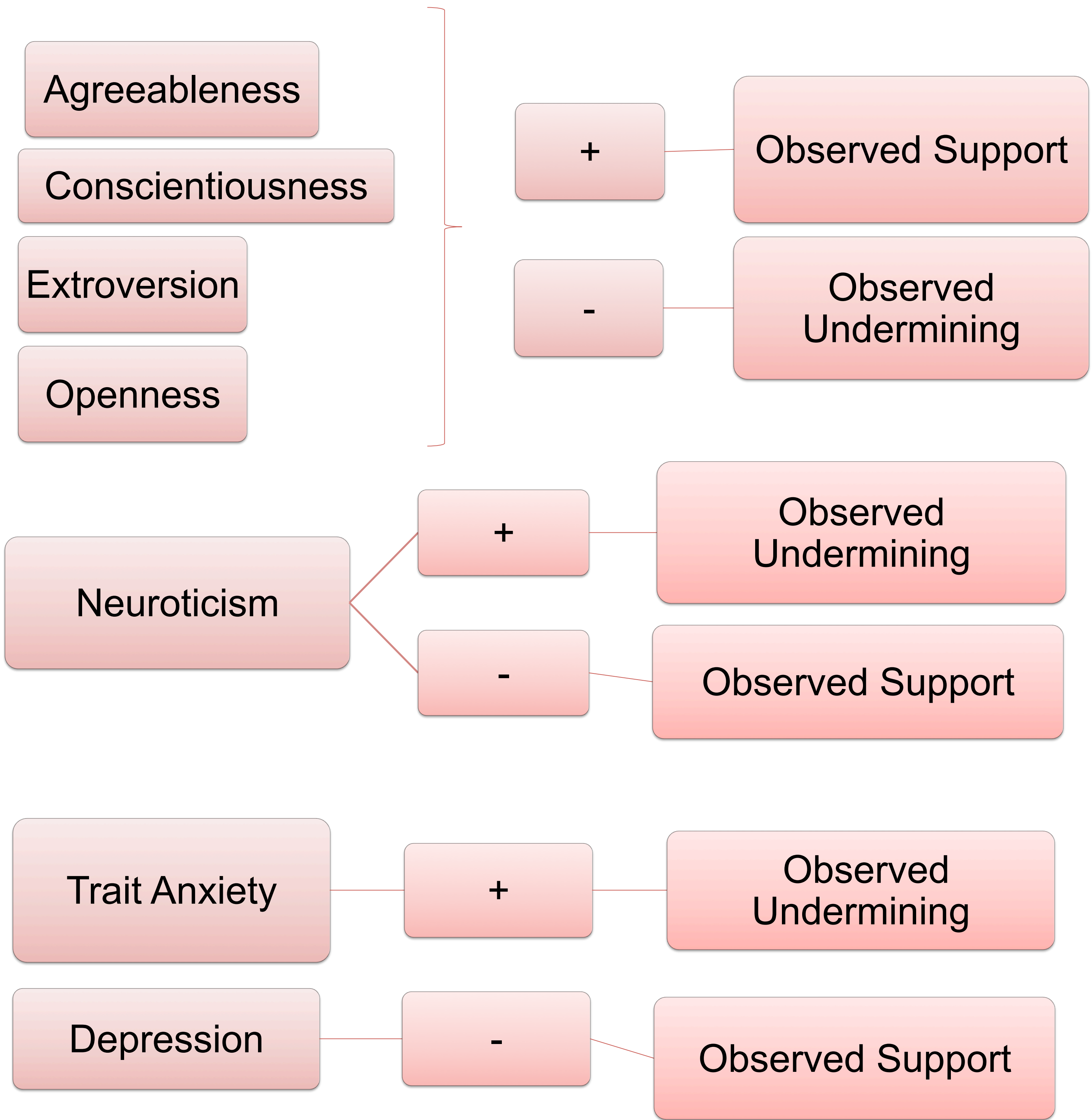
INTRODUCTION

- Parent-teacher, or cocaring relationships, have demonstrated conceptual similarities to coparenting relationships (Lang, 2015) and appear meaningful for children’s social-emotional functioning (Lang, 2014).
- From coparenting research, we know that parents’ mental health and personal characteristics are associated with the quality of their coparenting relationships (Feinberg, 2003).
- Previous self-report research has found
 - Teachers’ depression positively related to teachers’ perception of undermining and negatively related to teachers’ perception of support in their cocaring relationships (Maras et al., 2015).
 - Teachers’ agreeableness and conscientiousness were positively related to their perceptions of cocaring support (Maras et al., 2015).
- This study will examine how specific characteristics of cocaring relationships are expressed within behavioral interactions and how psychological well-being and personality impact the quality of these relationships.

PARTICIPANTS & PROCEDURE

- 25 families with a 6-36 month-old child and their teachers were recruited from 7 full-time childcare centers in Central Ohio.
- Collected self-report and observational data from each of the 25 parent-teacher dyads or triads

HYPOTHESES



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SOURCES

Mother and Child Symbol. Digital Image. Clipart-box.com. N.p., n.d. Web. 19 Jan. 2015.

SELF-REPORT MEASURES

Parents and teachers completed questionnaires including:

- **The Center for Epidemiologic Studies Depression Scale** (Radloff, 1977), measures symptoms defined by the American Psychiatric Association’s Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM-IV) for a major depressive episode
- **Spielberger State-Trait Anxiety Inventory** (Marteau & Bekker, 1992) assesses the temporary condition (state) and long-standing quality (trait) of anxiety in adults
- **NEO – Five Factor Inventory** (Costa & McCrae, 1992), is a 60-item measure of the "Big 5" dimensions of personality:
 1. Agreeableness: includes characteristics of kindness, affection, and trust
 2. Conscientiousness: includes attributes of self-control, thoughtfulness, and strong organizational skills
 3. Extroversion: includes qualities of assertiveness, excitability, and strong social skills
 4. Neuroticism: includes traits of anxiousness, moodiness, and sadness
 5. Openness: includes characteristics of creativity, curiosity, and novelty

OBSERVATIONAL CODING

Videos will be coded by the following criteria:

- **Coparenting Behavior Coding Scale** (Cowan & Cowan (1996), Altenburger et al., 2014):
 - **Support:** feelings of being welcomed, trusted, and encouraged by another individual
 1. Cooperation: Help and support between partners can be instrumental as well as emotional
 2. Interactiveness: Degree to which partners talk with and engage with each other
 3. Pleasure: Partners appears to enjoy sharing and collaborating in parental role and are able to demonstrate that during the interaction
 4. Warmth: Responsive/working together – a feeling of connection between partners is visible
 - **Undermining:** feelings of being criticized, distrusted, and challenged by another individual
 1. Anger: Degree to which both express irritation or dislike toward each other or toward their specific behavior(s)
 2. Coldness: Both seem distant, closed-off, and lack affection for each other
 3. Competition: Partners might interrupt or talk over one another
 4. Displeasure: Both express dislike of partner’s style of interacting with child either directly or veiled (i.e., sarcasm)

For the observational assessment, the individual scores under Support and Undermining will be averaged into 2 composite scores.

DISCUSSION

By examining how personality and psychological well-being are related to cocaring relationships:

- Identify teachers who may be at risk for developing negative cocaring relationships
- Design interventions aiming to strengthen the cocaring relationship

By observing cocaring interactions:

- Further our theoretical understanding of parent-teacher relationships for children
- Identify specific behaviors that convey support and undermining within cocaring relationships